

stops at the notch. It then flies along, with the grass streaming behind it. As the edge of the grass is much serrated, the bird has to consider and pass it through the work the right way. This serration renders it so difficult to pull a nest to pieces, and makes the same nest last for years.

In some instances the male continues to build for amusement after the nest is finished, not only elongating the tubular entrance, but also making a kind of false nest.

Before the colony ceased building there were more than seventy nests in the tree, which is represented in the photograph now exhibited (Plate XVII.). Three great notches may be seen on the trunk. These were made when the tree was smaller, by baring a side of the crown and tapping the trunk for toddy to be used in bread-making. This operation so weakened the tree, that last year in a violent storm the crown broke off, and thus destroyed the whole settlement.

8. Note on the Young of the Spotted Hyæna (*Crocuta maculata*). By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S., V.P.Z.S., &c.

The British Museum has lately acquired a very young female pup of the Spotted Hyæna (*Crocuta maculata*), which was born in the Society's Gardens.

The animal is covered with a short soft fur of nearly uniform length, of a nearly uniform rather brownish-black colour, which is rather paler on the face. It is without any indication of spots. The tail is slender, tapering. There is a stuffed specimen of a rather older and larger male in the British Museum, which was preserved by M. Verreaux at the Cape; it is of the same uniform tint, but is much paler, and has become paler than it originally was on one side by exposure in the case.

I may observe that the pups of the Striped Hyæna (*Hyæna striata*) are pale and streaked like the adult. There are some specimens of very young pups of this species in the British Museum.

The skull of the very young female pup is solid; and the bones are well ossified, and united in all parts by very narrow and often indistinct sutures. The bullæ of the ears are peculiar for having a large space on the outer side of the under surface only covered with membrane, which has the opening of the ear in the upper part near the margin of its outer side. This disk occupies about one-third of the lower surface of the bony bullæ. The cutting-teeth and the canines are well developed, the cutting-teeth in each of the jaws being placed in a straight line, the outer tooth in each series being rather the largest. The grinders are not developed above the alveoli; but their situation is indicated by the dried pulps. There are three pulps on each side of each jaw: the two front ones on each side of the upper jaw, belonging to the premolars, are small; the others in both jaws are rather large.

Fig. 1.

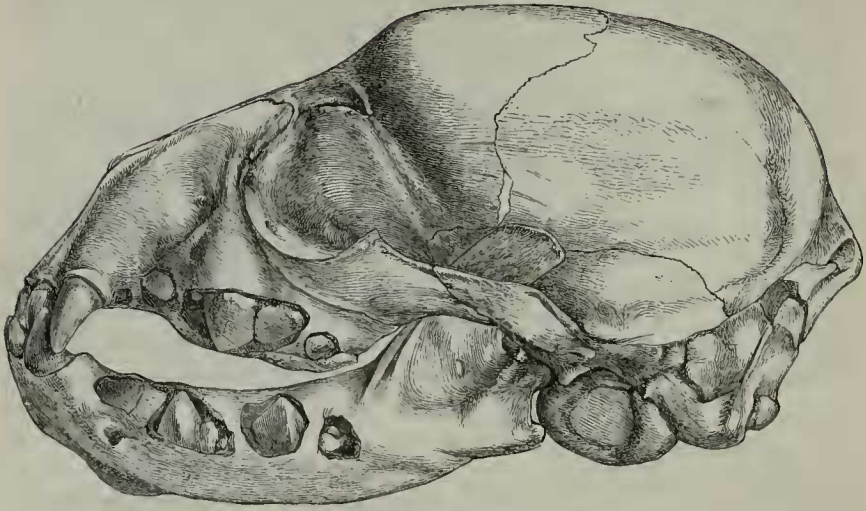


Fig. 2.

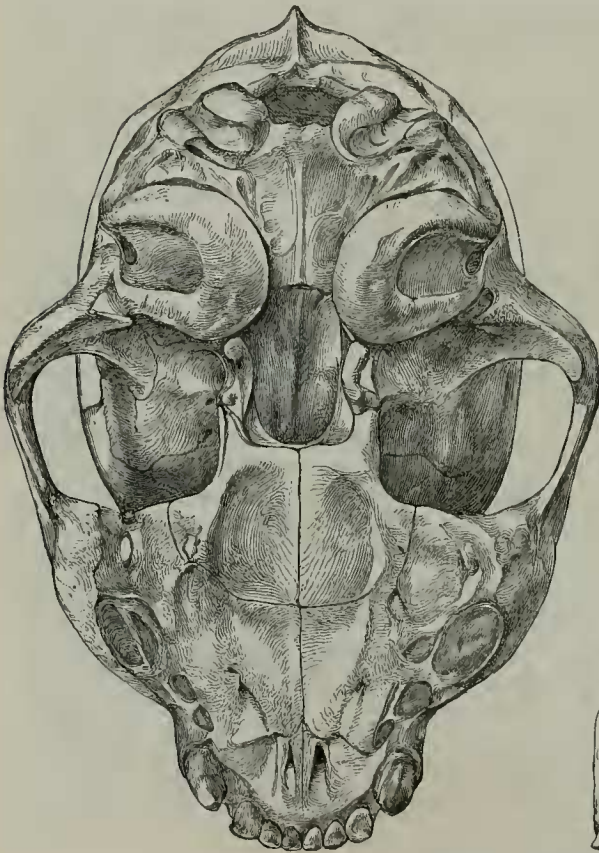


Fig. 3.



Fig. 1. Skull of young Hyæna (lateral view).
 2. Lower surface of ditto.
 3. Left ramus of lower jaw.

The upper jaw, when cut away at the side (as shown in fig. 1, p. 246), exhibits a very rudimentary canine tooth of the adult series, and three molars, the middle being the flesh-tooth of the milk-series.

The lower jaw shows three molars of the milk-series in a moderate state of development, and a cavity in which the large hinder molar is to be developed, but which is now in a very rudimentary state.

The first tooth indicated on the edge of the jaw is the permanent canine, and the two other teeth are the anterior molars.

I am not aware that the skull of the young animal of this genus has been figured; so I have had some drawings, to illustrate this paper, made by Mr. Ford.

9. On a Variety of the *Canis vulpes* (*Vulpes vulgaris*, Brisson)
found in the Forest of the Ardennes, Belgium. By Dr.
EDWARD HAMILTON, F.L.S.

The Prince of Musignano, in his 'Fauna Italica,' describes a variety of the *Canis vulpes* under the name of *melanogaster*, and claims specific characters, in that the colour of the fur on the throat, chest, and abdomen is black instead of whitish grey; the head and back dark greyish, and mixed with a quantity of silver hairs; the tail more bushy, and furnished with a white tip. Mr. Gerrard, in his 'Catalogue of Bones in the British Museum,' places the *Vulpes melanogaster* as a distinct species. Dr. Gray, "Catalogue of the Canidæ" (P. Z. S. 1868, p. 515), describes it as a variety only; *Hab.* Italy. Linnæus describes a variety, *Canis alopes*, with a straight tail black at the tip, and smaller than the *Canis vulpes*. Buffon's *Renard charbonnier*, or *Alopes europæus*, is of a silver greyish colour, tail tipped with white; remarkable black feet and legs, which appear as if produced by charcoal-dust, hence its name; it is smaller than the common Fox. *Hab.* Burgundy.

The variety which I bring before the notice of the Society was shot last autumn in the Forest of the Ardennes, near Rochefort, in Belgium. The hunters there know it under the name of "Le Renard Noir." It is comparatively rare; about five or six are killed during the season. It is larger than the Common Fox, and a very active animal. Colour brownish grey, mixed with silver-grey hairs; deep brownish red stripe extending down the back, lighter towards the tail; head, face, and neck brownish red, mixed with silver-grey; throat, chest, and abdomen black, merging into blackish grey at the posterior part; tail blackish brown on the upper part, blackish yellow beneath, the tip black; fore legs blackish grey from shoulder to claws; hind legs, a blackish grey stripe running from the hip and becoming black at the feet.

The skin measures from tip of nose to root of tail 3 feet; tail 1 foot 6 inches. Approximate height at shoulders 1 foot 5-6 inches.

In comparing the skin with the figure given by the Prince of Musignano (*l. c.*) there is a great similarity, with the exception of